



# Department of Justice

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## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES TEXAS MAN SENTENCED FOR ATTACKING ISLAMIC CENTER**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Justice Department announced today that Antonio Flores was sentenced to 171 months imprisonment for attempting to firebomb the Islamic Center of El Paso in El Paso, Texas.

“This kind of conduct is unconscionable, and the Justice Department will vigorously prosecute any individual who attempts to intimidate his fellow citizen through such abhorrent behavior,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bradley J. Schlozman. “We are gratified that the court recognized the gravity of this offense and imposed such a significant and appropriate sentence.”

On March 22, 2005, Flores pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to violating 18 U.S.C. § 247, which prohibits damaging or attempting to damage religious property, and 18 U.S.C. § 844(h), which prohibits the use of fire or an explosive device in the commission of a felony. At his plea hearing, Flores admitted that he threw a Molotov cocktail at the Islamic Center and placed a second, similar device near a gas meter on the Center’s property.

At today’s sentencing hearing, U.S. District Judge Phillip R. Martinez imposed a sentence of 171 months incarceration and 3 years supervised release.

“Mr. Flores’ behavior was reprehensible and put the lives of innocent children at risk,” said U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton. “Today’s sentence shows that this behavior will be severely punished.”

In announcing the sentencing, Acting Assistant Attorney General Schlozman commended the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the FBI,

and the El Paso Police Department for their involvement in the investigation and prosecution of the attack on the El Paso Islamic Center.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas.

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